

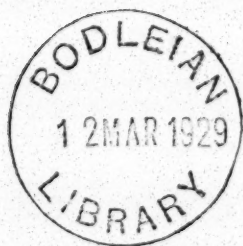
A N
IMPARTIAL VIEW
OF THE
COAL-TRADE.

In which are fairly stated the
DIFFICULTIES
Under which the
Coal-Mine *and* Ship-Owners
Labour.

TOGETHER WITH
The MEANS to redress the *Evil*,
Greatly abate the present Price of *Coals*,
AND
Augment the GOVERNMENT'S REVENUE.

By WILLIAM BOWMAN, Merchant.

L O N D O N :
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IMPARTIAL VIEW

OF THE

COAL-TRADE.



WHEN any Person undertakes to demonstrate a publick Evil, which carries the Face of affecting the Revenue, he must expect to be attack'd from all Quarters by the Ignorant, and find many Difficulties to struggle with : For 'tis hard to give even the wisest and most publick-spirited Ministers a just Idea of many Things which they are to determine upon: And impossible that any can be thoroughly acquainted with every Branch from which arise the pub-

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lick Revenues, without being more than Man. There are doubtless some Taxes, which, *primâ facie*, seem an Increase, which, on a thorough Examination, will be found a Diminution of the publick Revenue. It cannot be expected I should enter into a Detail of these, as I do not pretend to know them, but imperfectly, from common Fame: But, as I am thoroughly acquainted with the Coal-Trade, by an Experience of forty-five Years, having long dealt for great Sums in every Branch of it, therefore will venture to assert, and hope to prove, to a Demonstration, that the Tax upon Coal is one of this Number; and farther, that it is an inconceivable Detriment, not only to the collective Body of the People, but severe in the highest Degree upon the middling and poorer Sort, especially on the Manufacturers: And that the Nation in general suffers both in Strength and Reputation, by its being continued; consequently, that the Removal of this Tax will not only be a general Good to the Subject, but bring
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a much greater Sum into the *Exchequer*.

When the Malady is thoroughly known, the proper Remedy is more easily discovered. I need as little mention the great Benefit of Coal in its Use, as expatiate on the Advantages of Health, the one and the other being perfectly well understood. Wherefore I shall primarily shew the Danger we are in of losing the Blessing of the former, at least of seeing all the Poor depriv'd of or reduc'd, by the great Price, to receive, but little Comfort from it, if the present ill-judg'd Tax is continued; together with the fatal Consequences; and, in the second Place, demonstrate that the Epithet *ill-judg'd* is well apply'd, by evincing that the Government will, in easing the Subject of this Burthen, receive abundantly more than the Tax on Coals now produces, and yet not deprive those of Bread who are now employed by Means of the said Tax.

To prove my first Position, it is necessary that the Reader should be made acquainted with the many Difficul-

ties the Owners of Collieries labour under, the great Expence they are at, and the vast Hazard not only of not having an adequate Return, but of ruining themselves and Families: And from these will naturally arise the Danger I have mentioned, which will be obvious to the meanest Capacity.

The Destruction of our Forest-Wood by various Means, building both at Land and for Sea, Fire-wood, and Iron Mines, obliged our searching into the Bowels of the Earth for Fuel necessary to defend us against the Rigour of the Winter-Season, directed thereto by Nature's having cast up to the Surface Veins of her hidden Treasure. The first Miners, as what they thus took up was not a Quantity sufficient to supply our Wants, opened Pits; but then they descended very few Fathoms, to have their Expectations answered; the first Miners consequently met with none of the Obstacles which our present Miners daily encounter, as Damps often mortal, and ever noxious, which not seldom

dom take Fire, and destroy thirty or forty poor Souls at a Time. This Danger makes the Workmen unwilling to descend a great Depth, and 'tis Money only, that is, an extraordinary Price, such a one as renders the Pits of little Value, can prevail on them to work on these deep Veins, where alone is the Danger from the Want of Air, which cannot be convey'd to them with the same Facility as when nearer the Surface. This Evil, however, will, I hope, be prevented for the future by the *Ventilators*, which I have seen at *Tedington*: The Use and Advantage of which will be soon publish'd by the Learned, truly Reverend and Benevolent Dr. *Hales*, whose publick Spirit and humane Benevolence make the Good of Mankind in general, and that of his Country in particular, the principal, I may say the sole, View of his Studies. But this is not the only Invention of his, which makes good this Character of that invaluable *Englishman*. I say, I hope this Evil will be prevented, because I cannot

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not believe any Person so blind to his own Interest, or so inhuman, as to risque so many Mens Lives, by not having them at his Works; especially when they may be had at a very easy Rate: For the Reverend Doctor gives his Invention to the World: And if he expects any Reward, I sincerely believe, as I have the Honour to know him, it is in the next. But can any, through a mistaken Oeconomy, reject the Advantage that naturally flows from these *Ventilators*?

Besides the Firing by Damps, there is the Danger of Fire by Workmen; and often a large Track of Vein is lost by it. Again, the Hazard is not small of losing a Vein by the Ignorance or Negligence of the Viewers, in not leaving Pillars of a sufficient Bulk to support the Roof; which falling in, often destroys many of the Workmen, and entirely ruins all that Part of the Colliery. Farther, they have to contend with great Bodies of Water, and Dykes: For had the first Miners been expos'd to the Labour, Uncertainty, and great Expence of
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our modern Miners, 'tis very probable they would not have had the Courage to pursue their Search and we should at this Day, as every one knows our Country affords not Wood to answer the End of Coals, have been reduced to the Necessity of Importing from our more northern Neighbours. Indeed, they could not have struggled with the same Difficulties, as they wanted the Experience which two Hundred Years have given us, and were not Masters of the Sums requisite to make Head against the numerous Impediments, which are found in descending eighty or ninety Fathoms, to come at the Coal: Which is now, in many Pits, the Case of the present Adventurers. Nay, many Gentlemen, who have very good Mines in their Estates, and want not Money to work them, are at this Day too greatly discouraged, by these Difficulties, Uncertainties, and a certain great Expence, to expend any Money in having them opened; and I question not, if there were a compulsive Law to work,

work, or lose these Mines, they would rather consent to give them up, than to hazard their Fortunes, having, before their Eyes, the Example of many Gentlemen and their Families ruined (to my Knowledge) by endeavouring their own, and the Advantage of the Publick ; of which Number I myself may very justly in a great Measure be accounted ; to which Misfortune the local Duties have not a little contributed, as they prevent the Consumption, by enhancing the Price of Coal ; and this Backwardness, or rather Aversion, to the raising Coals, is a Fact so very well known, that had there not been found four or five Gentlemen of Wealth and Spirit, who were very unjustly clamour'd against, I may venture to say, that at this Time Coals would have been at five Pound a Chaldron in the Pool ; and we may attribute their Courage in launching out large Sums (in a great Measure) to their Predecessors having considerable Interests in the Mines, which devolved to them : and

to their not being so thoroughly acquainted with the many Difficulties, &c. and how small a Profit would redound from the vast Sums they employ'd in the Collieries, and the Coal-Navigation, as they have since been by a dear-bought Experience.

It is almost impossible for Men, unacquainted with the working of Collieries to conceive the Expence occasion'd by the above Difficulties, not to mention the sinking the Pits, as the draining the Waters, and the cutting through the already mention'd Dykes, which are Beds of Stone lying obliquely and intercepting the Vein; these the Miners are obliged to cut through for 1, nay 2 or 300 Yards, uncertain, after all, of recovering the Vein; which, if thrown upward towards the Surface of the Earth, gives but little Hopes of being of long Duration; and these Dykes, which cause so much Labour and great Expence, are so frequent that, in two or three Miles working, they may sometimes meet with five or six of them

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of different Thickness. The gaining of some particular Collieries, amounts from 10,000 to 30,000 lb. And, after this, there are certain annual contingent Charges, *viz.* Way-leave, Rents, Stewards or Viewers, &c. which amount from 1000 to 2000 lb. a Year, and to more in some Collieries, and must be paid, whether the Quantity of Coals sold is more or less. After the Difficulties and Expence mention'd to raise the Coal, the Proprietors have many others to encounter, which I shall take Notice of in the Sequel, and now come to the great Hazard they run of having even their Principal or any Part of it reimburs'd.

The Hazards of being drown'd out of their Pits by the Subterranean *Waters*, and of losing and not again retrieving the Vein, are obvious; but, after the Coal is rais'd, and brought to the Wharfs for Shipping, they run no small Risque with the *Hoastmen*, or *Fitters*, whom we may not improperly call the Proprietors Factors, or Agents, as they

they drive the bargain between the Masters of the Ships and Proprietor ; but not seldom go off with the Money belonging to the latter. Yet cannot they be tax'd with Extravagance or Dishonesty ; for they run out their Money in purchasing Shares in Shipping, that they may be able to promote the Sale of the Proprietor's Coal, they are concern'd for ; hazarding their Fortunes thus, in the Collier-Navigation, frequently ruins many of them, and Families. Nay, to promote the Sale of their Coal, the Proprietors are obliged to become Part-owners in Shipping, which seldom or never make any return for the Money lain out for these Shares ; I do not mention the Danger of the Seas, because that is in common with all who trade on that fickle Element. Shipping in this Trade was formerly own'd by Country Gentlemen, Merchants and Tradesmen, who not finding their Advantage let drop their Shares, or parted with their Properties, which have been purchas'd by, and are

in the Hands of the Masters, who have taken these Shares that they may have Bread, by being continued in Employment; and these have brought in Owners of Collieries, to take Parts in the Ships, by purchasing Coal of such preferably to any other.

These, whom we call Ship-owners, are also, as well as the Coal Proprietors, in a very comfortable Situation; for these Ships which are employ'd in *Great Britain*, make, some of them, no return for Interest of the disburs'd Money, when Wear, Tear, &c. is deducted, and some not above 2 or 3 *per Cent.* after the Hazard of eight or ten Voyages in a Year. But put it at an Average at the highest, three *per Cent.* what Body of Merchants or Men wou'd, in so hazardous a Voyage, venture, as these Ship-owners do, one Million five hundred thousand Pounds, with the View of so small and uncertain a Return; and which, if lain by, will not do more than substitute new for the worn out Ships? I may be allowed to speak a little

little confidently on this Head, as I have suffer'd in this particular Article the loss of more than 20,000 l. It might possibly be question'd whether these Ship-owners, who are not Masters, are in their right Senses, had I not given a Reason above, which compells them to take Shares in the Ships, as the less Evil of two: For 'tis better to suffer some Loss by being a Part-owner of the Bottoms, than want a Market for their Coal; which, when rais'd, if it lies any Time (for want of Purchasers) expos'd to the Air, its bituminous Quality is carry'd off, it grows Slaty, and is of little Value.

From what I have already said, which every one, who is acquainted with Collieries, must know is but an Epitome of what I might justly advance, naturally flows the Danger I have lain down, *viz.* that of our losing the Advantage of the Sea-coal Trade, or of seeing great Numbers of the laborious and industrious Poor deprived of, or receive little Comfort from it,
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by the exorbitant Price it must rise to, if the local Duties (so unequal, as to be thrown upon one third only of the *British* Subjects) are continued: *For they* are Duties which so greatly cramp the Trade, that I may safely aver, one third more Coal might immediately be brought to Market, which wou'd bring the present Price of Coal (if the Duties were taken off) to 14 or 15 Shillings *per* Chaldron in the Pool. This, I shall prove in the Sequel, is the Interest of the Government to do, as the removal of this Tax will give Life to the Woollen, Linen, and Iron Manufactures, not to mention others, and Branches of Commerce, and render all other Taxes less burthensome, untill the Exigencies of the Government yield farther Ease and Relief to the Community. The Difficulties I have lain down, one wou'd think enough to discourage any Man from risquing his Fortune, especially when we farther consider that they who venture to search the Bowels of the Earth, must take the whole Hazard of the Success

Success upon themselves. Nobody will insure what they risque; in which the Merchant-Adventurer has greatly the Advantage: For if his Ship and Goods are lost, his Fortune is safe, by Insurance, and he loses only the Insurance Money and about 15 *per Cent.* The Ship-owners may insure; but their Profit is so little, they cannot afford it. I speak from my own Knowledge, when I say that the Spirits of the Masters of Collieries and the Ship-owners are greatly sunk by these Difficulties, and, after all, the Uncertainty of even common Interest for the Money they disburse. For the Profit must arise from the great Consumption, and 'tis the Hope of this, has made the Coal and Ship-owners, sink the Price of Coal to the Price it now is; which, however, will not force a Trade while the local Duties continue. But it may be ask'd how the Tax, which is but inconsiderable, when compared with other Charges, can have so fatal an Effect as to discourage the above Owners from continuing a Trade so absolutely

lutely necessary to the Public? I answer, that the Tax itself is productive of an Evil which few, if any, consider; tho' every Commodity, that is tax'd, produces the same, it is a handle to enhance the Price. So as we may not improperly say, to loadit with a second or additional Tax, and consequently prevents the Consumption; for 'tis evidently the Cheapness of a Commodity which carries off the large Quantities of it. How many poor Families here in *London*, not to speak of the Inland Poor furnish'd, from *London*, with Sea-coal, if they can any Way purchase it, now make a Shift with little or no Firing, burn Bones, to eek out the small Parcel of Coal they are able to purchase, gather, in the Streets, Pease-cods, and Bean-shells in the Summer, which they lay by and burn in the Winter, mix'd with an handful or two of Coals, *who wou'd*, were this second Tax (which must fall with the King's) taken off, pass the Winter much more comfortably; as this alone wou'd enable

able the Coal-owners to raise more Coal, for it wou'd encrease the Consumption by lowering the Price in proportion to the Burthen, removed, of the King's Tax and the enhanced Price or additional Tax. If the King's Tax is continued, the other will never drop; the present Consumption will never be sufficient to raise the already sunk Spirits of the Proprietors both of Pits and Ships, who will, from Necessity, be oblig'd to throw them up: And, if this is the Case, I believe none will be found of so public a Spirit as to ruine his private Fortune for the public Good, by succeeding them; and then, not to mention the great Misfortune of wanting Fuel, we shall lose our only Nursery for Seamen, without we assert our own Fishery, which, I believe, we shall hardly venture to do, as we must infallibly, by such a Step, draw upon us the Indignation of our good Friends the *Dutch*, who begin to look upon it, in great Measure, their Right, tho' as yet not an exclusive one.

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I have said, the Coal and Ship-Adventurers have endeavour'd to raise the Consumption by selling for little or no Profit, and not only these, who are at the Head of the Trade, but those employ'd by and under them, contribute to their utmost to keep it up, under all the present Difficulties, by working for meer Bread. I shall give an Instance or two out of many. A Man and Horse convey about three Tonns of Coal, seven or eight Miles by Land, for two Shillings or half a Crown. Now the same weight wou'd not be convey'd by Land Carriage, the same Space, for four or six Times the Money near *London*, or in almost any Part of the Kingdom. The Ships bring the Coal to *London*, and carry it to other Sea-ports of the Kingdom for three Shillings a Tonn, frequently for less: And no other Coasters will transport Goods at less Freight than 8 Shillings *per* Tonn; and many Sorts of Goods pay 15 Shillings for a shorter Distance. Two sufficient Proofs of the Industry, public Spirit

Spirit and Moderation of these Coal and Ship-Adventurers, who wou'd be content *with* one half of the enhanced Price or second Tax made under Colour of the King's Tax. To set this Moderation of the Coal-mine and Ship-owners, and others concern'd in that Trade, and the Danger of their throwing it up, in a fair Light, I must desire my Reader to reflect on the Price of Coals in the Pool, and on the Hand-labour, the Hazards, the Difficulties and Expence, in sinking Pits, to even ninety Fathoms: Some Collieries having 4 or 5 Fire-Engines to drain the Water, in the cutting through Dykes, in the carrying the Coal in Land-carriage and by Water to the Shipping, and transporting it to Market: Most of which is Labour of the Hand, and requires Men of Strength, in the flower of their Age; who must be well supported, to be able to undergo the fatigue of the most slavish Labour, worse than that of Plantation *Negroes*. I say, when they consider this, and the Price in

the Pool, they will be convinced, that neither the Pit nor Ship-owners can possibly make near the Interest of the Money they disburse, tho' the Capital is in such Danger as to be entirely sunk: And, from this Consideration, we may justly apprehend that a Number of these Adventurers, either from a prudent Tendernefs for their Families, or through Inability, will be obliged to throw up their Works, and the Masters declining the Adventure in Ships: But what more strongly gives us Reason to apprehend such a public Misfortune, is, that the poor Workmen, the Trade being cramp'd by the King's and the second Tax wou'd not have half Employment, if the Coal-owners, to prevent the starving of these poor industrious People, to keep their Pits open, and to find Money for the annual contingent Charges, did not raise Coal to answer these Ends of Wages, &c. and these annual Quantities which they are
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compelled to raise, For the Coals wou'd, by the Air, be spoilt for Sale, greatly exceeding the demand at Market, causes a struggle for the Vent: And obliges one to under sell another; the Consequence of which is, that the weakest, who cannot bear to work their Pits at a Loss, must be ruined, in Time, and the Men of weighty purses who can, will, by their Ruin, have an Opportunity to make up their Prior-losses, by the small Number of Pits going; and then, may they not set their own Price on their Coal, or refuse working them, and throw up their Works? In which Case, where are the Men, who have at once Experience, Fortune, and Courage to undertake them? That many Pits have been shut up, and many Men ruined, is evident, consequently brings the Danger nearer to us; for 'tis natural to believe that the same Cause will produce the same Effect, we may expect to see other Pits thrown up, and who are they, that wou'd not use the Means
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(which such a public Misfortune put into their Hands) to make good what they had formerly lost, as it cou'd no way cast a Blemish on their probity. But the Danger may be entirely removed ; the present Number of Pits, and others, kept open, so great a Number of Poor set to Work, the present Coal and Ship-owners gain a reasonable Profit, several Families saved from Ruin, &c. &c. &c. by the removal of the local Duties:

An infinite Number of industrious Families in and about *London*, cannot at present purchase Sea-coal, now that the best is at about 25 Shillings and Sixpence in the Pool ; how then can they in *Oxfordshire*, and other inland Counties, notwithstanding they lie on, or near, the *Thames*, make any Provision of this Fuel for their Winter-service ? The removal of this Tax is alone wanting to give Life and Vigour to the languishing Condition of many Manufactures, which pay only 5 Shillings Duty ; but more particularly to such as in and
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about *London, Oxon, &c.* pay eight Shillings, and the enhanced Price, or additional Tax.

These Considerations very well merit the Attention of the legislative Power, and, I think, no Ministry can be averse from taking off a Tax, which is a Diminution of the public Revenues, as I now come to demonstrate.

All Taxes in general, under whatever Denomination, produce Sums in proportion to the Consumption of the Commodity on which they are lain; and this Consumption, let it be of whatever Necessaries of Life, is made by middling and the laborious Part of the Nation, which, we may suppose, are about four Fifths of the People of *Great Britain*. Now whatever Business, Trade or Manufacture, employs the most Hands, and the greater Number of Shipping, evidently brings into the Exchequer the most Money by the Consumption it causes, and is of the greatest Service to the Public in training up Mariners. And this will be found to be the Coal-Trade; when

when once it can be admitted to have a free Circulation, I mean, when it is not clogg'd with a Tax from the Government, and a second impos'd: I believe, none will deny this Assertion, who knows, as the Truth is, that even now, under the Inconveniencies mention'd, this Trade employs Six Hundred Thousand labouring Persons, by Land and Sea, and about fifteen Hundred Sail of Ships: Several Hundreds of which are of large Burthen, strong and able as any employ'd by Merchants in the *European* Trade; except the *Dutch*, who, I have been credibly inform'd, employ a like Number of large Ships, to export the Fish they take on our Coasts. This is a much greater Number than any Nation employs in transporting any of their Home Productions, or Manufactures, to any Part of the World, yet few of these Ships are freighted for any other than our own Ports.

The above Number of Hands employed in the Coal-Trade, may, to People who have no Idea of it, seem an Hyperbole;

bole; but when 'tis known that five Millions of Tonn Weight of Coals are annually rais'd and conveyed to several Parts of the Kingdom, and mostly by the Labour of the Hand, it will more readily be credited. This great Number employ'd in the Coal-Trade makes an annual Consumption of upwards of eleven Millions Sterling; and this, not in Luxury, but in the Necessaries of Life, the Production of our own Country or Colonies: And as their Labour is paid in ready Money, every Week, and not in Goods, as some Labourers and Workmen are, it causes a Circulation of a large Sum of Money, tho' that receiv'd, and expended, by every Individual is but very little. If we compare this Number with that employ'd in the Woollen, Linen, and Silk Manufactures, which we may compute, amounts to One Million Five Hundred Thousand Persons, we shall find, by the Difference of the Wages and Labour, that the Coal-Workers, &c. consume three Times what is consum'd of our Home

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and Plantation Products, by the others, tho' Nine Hundred Thousand Persons more in Number, allowing three Hundred thirteen working Days on either Side: And this will not seem wonderful, when we consider that a great Number of Women and Children are employed in the Manufactures, and that none but robust able-body'd Men are fit for the Coal-working, Transporting, &c. who must be supported with solid Food and strong Drink to recruit their exhausted Strength; whereas a small Matter suffices Men who lead a sedentary Life, and have little or no Exercise, as is the Case of those employ'd in the Loom, &c. But this of Men is not the only Consumption caused by the Coal-Trade, which employs so great a Number of Horses: These contribute to the keeping up the Value of the Lands, and enables the Owners to support more chearfully the necessary Taxes: Besides, what a Benefit accrues to the Nation by this Trade

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employing twenty Thousand Mariners, who are a supply for the Government on any Emergency, and fifteen Hundred Sail of Ships a great Number of which are fit for Transport, or Store-Ships? By what is premis'd, I think it evident that the Coal-Trade is of greater Service, and will be, to the Public than any one Branch whatever of Commerce to *Great-Britain*, consequently, from its great Importance, merits the greatest Indulgence and Encouragement, and ought to be free'd from all Obstacles which may cramp and hinder its being extended; but more especially, if such Impediments can be remov'd with Advantage to the publick Revenues.

As to the Trade being cramp'd by the local Duties, and in a decaying Condition, may be made evident from what the Government has formerly receiv'd, and now actually receives, from the Coal-Tax; which, if less, plainly shews a Decay of the Trade. As to the removing the Tax with Advantage, it

will evidently appear, when we consider that the Cheapness of Coal will increase, in few Years, the Consumption to double what it is: And this Consumption will oblige the employing of so great a Number of Hands, many of which are now a Load to their respective Parishes, and will, by the Removal of this Tax, be of use to their Country, and, by the Consumption they will cause, when their Labour will enable them, in such Articles as are tax'd, *viz.* in Malt Liquors, Spirits, Tobacco, Sugar, Soap, Candles, &c. which their Want of Employ will not now allow them, will bring in considerable more than the Government now receives by the Coal-Tax; which is certainly *ill-judged*, it am right in my Calculation, that the Coal-Trade, would, by the great Consumption which must follow the taking off the Tax, employ about two Hundred Thousand Men more instantly than it now does: Which will bring into the *Exchequer* double

double what the present Coal-Tax pays; besides the great Comfort to and the Preservation of, so great a Number of industrious poor People, who for want of Sea-Coal, which they are in a Manner prohibited the Use of, in hard Winters, have suffered great Severity, and many of them perish'd by rigorous Cold.

The present Consumption of our own and Plantation Products, which the *Excise-Office* and London Traders to *Newcastle*, *Sunderland*, and thereabout, in those Commodities, are no Strangers to, authorizes my having said that an additional Number of two Hundred Thousand Men in the Coal-Trade, which Number can immediately be employed, will make an Amount of double the Money rais'd by the Tax on Coal, consequently the Government loses about two Hundred thirty Thousand Pound annually, by its Continuance, beside preventing a greater Number of Mariners being rear'd;
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for the Number of Ships must be encreas'd as the Quantity of Coals rais'd encreases, which will be in proportion to the Consumption, and that Consumption will be so great as above, when the Price will allow the laborious Poor and others to have the full Advantage and Comfort of Fuel, so necessary to the support of Life, that they would chuse to be stinted in their Bread, to have a plentiful Provision of Firing, preferably to scanty Fuel, and full Bread.

I may possibly hereafter give a more particular Account of this Trade, and be exact in my Calculations: Which I do not pretend to have been in this small Sketch, if I am not prevented by some abler Hand; which, as I have no other Interest in view than that of my Country, will give me a singular Pleasure. Indeed, I should not have kept silence thus long, had I not hoped some other more proper to represent the evil Consequences of the Coal
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Tax than myself, wou'd have had the public Good so much at Heart, as to have spared me the Labour ; and I can attribute the Silence of many able Men, and sincere Lovers of their Country, to no other Cause but their not being well acquainted with the Nature, the Advantages, the Expence, Labour, and Hazards of the Coal Trade, and the fatal Consequences must attend it's Decay : Which can no other Ways be prevented than by its being exonerated from the local Duties ; but how can the Persons concern'd, in this Trade, who have great Fortunes employ'd in it, who suffer by our Superiors not being made acquainted with the Grievances I have mention'd ; excuse themselves from a Charge of great Indolence, both with regard to the Interest of their Families, and to that of the Public ; for tho' every individual must receive Benefit from a general Good, yet, in this Case, the Pit, and Ship-owners, will have the more immediate and sensible

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Advantage. Let them not excuse themselves, by answering, as some do, that Writing is not their Talent; for if that was an allowable Plea, I had as just Reason to decline the Task; but, as Truth wants no Embellishment, and Matters of Fact require no Art to relate, I thought a longer Forbearance wou'd render me as inexcusable as any: Since, I believe, none have a more thorough Knowledge of the Coal-trade, from the Vein to the Market; few have launch'd out more Money in that and the Coal-navigation, or suffer'd greater Losses; such as I decline mentioning, as they must seem incredible; and few, if there be any, have taken the Pains I have, in attaining my Knowledge: As I may modestly say, my Enquiries have made me ride at my own great Expence more than 10,000 Miles.

If this Advertisement, for 'tis not of a Length to merit any other Title, shou'd have the happy Success to rouse
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our Coal-ship-owners, and all Manufacturers and others whom this unequal burthen of the Tax lies most heavy, to a more ample Representation of their Sufferings, and the public Damage, which attends the Continuance of the Coal-tax; and, I am sure, it is their Interest in particular, as their Fortunes or great Interests are at Stake, to unite and lay them before the Parliament; and if, by such means, the Evil is redressed, as I flatter myself, it will, when thoroughly understood, I shall be sensible of the greatest Satisfaction, in having contributed to so manifest an Advantage to my Country; so immediate a Relief to so great a Number of Manufacturers, to the comfortable living of more than 500,000 Poor industrious and laborious *British* Subjects in the Winter and cold Seasons; and to the preventing many of them from perishing, or being render'd unfit for Labour, consequently incapable of getting their Bread, by the severity of cold Winters. What encourages me to hope
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this is, the Poor being so often graciously recommended to the legislative Power from the Throne both by his late and present Majesty, that care might be taken for their Relief, and they might not, in raising necessary Supplies, be sensible of any oppressive Burthen.



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